

Message Text

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EXDIS

FOR AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN FROM SCHNEIDER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN IN

SUBJECT: PEACE CORPS PAPER FOR AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN

REF: (A) STATE 17793; (B) NEW DELHI 1382

1. THE PEACE CORPS BEGAN IN INDIA. THE FIRST VOLUNTEERS POSTED OVERSEAS ARRIVED IN PUNJAB IN EARLY 1962. PUNJAB WAS A "TWST CASE"--AND A SUCCESSFUL ONE--FOR THE ENTIRE PROGRAM. BEGINNING WITH 100 VOLUNTEERS, THE PROGRAM IN PUNJAB CONCENTRATED ON AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORK, NUTRITION, IRRIGATION, AND EDUCATION. THESE FIELDS OF CONCENTRATION SET THE PATTERN FOR INDIA.

2. BY MARCH 1967, THERE WERE 1,276 VOLUNTEERS IN INDIA. THEY HAD COME AT THE REQUEST OF THE VARIOUS STATE GOVERNMENTS AND WERE WORKING IN FIELDS IMPORTANT TO THOSE GOVERNMENTS. AT THAT HIGH POINT, VOLUNTEERS WERE FOUND IN EVERY STATE EXCEPT KARALA, HIMACHAL PRADESH, JAMMU AND KASHMIR, AND ASSAM. APPROXIMATELY TWO-THIRDS OF THEM CNCENTRATED ON FOOD PRODUCTION (AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION, FISHEGGES, POULTY, DAIRYING, AND PIG RAISING); THE REMAINDER WORKED IN MINOR IRRIGATION (GROUND WATER SURVEYS AND TUBE-WELL DRILLING), NUTRITION AND EDUCATION (TEACHING ENGLISH AND MANAGING WORKSHOPS FOR SICIENCE TEACHERS. THE VOLUNTEERS WERE OVERWHELMINGLY GENERALISTS WITH LIBERAL-ARTS BACKGROUNDS,

WHO RECEIVED 10 TO 12 WEEKS TRAINING BEFORE EMBARKING ON TWO-YEAR

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TOURS. OVER THENDEARS, THE GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS OF THAT TRAINING

SHIFTED FROM THE USA TO INDIA.

3. DURING THE LATE 1960'S, THE AVERAGE DELAY BETWEEN THE FORWARDING OF A REQUEST FROM PEACE CORPS/INDIA TO WASHINGTON AND THE ARRIVAL OF TRAINEES IN INDIA WAS THREE TO SIX MONTHS, DEPENDING PRIMARILY ON THE LEVEL OF VOLUNTEER SKILLS REQUESTED. SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES ARE WORTH CITING:

(A) 27 JUNE 1968--GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REQUESTS 20 VOLUNTEERS TRAINED IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR MYSORE STATE

8 OCTOBER 1968--VOLUNTEERS ARRIVE

(B) 27 JUNE 1968--GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REQUESTS 24 VOLUNTEERS TRAINED IN VEGETABLE TRUCK GARDENING FOR MYSORE STATE

20 DECEMBER 1968-- VOLUNTEERS ARRIVE

(C) 30 JULY 1971--GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REQUESTS 10 VOLUNTEERS TRAINED IN DAIRYING FOR RAJASTHAN STATE

12 NOVEMBER 1971--VOLUNTEERS ARRIVE

4. IN 1971 AND 1972, INCREASING INDIAN EMPHASIS ON THE GOAL OF SELF-RELIANCE AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, POLICY DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN INDIA AND THE USA AFFECTED THE SIZE AND SCOPE OF ALL US TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN INDIA, PEACE CORPS INCLUDED. IN MID-1971, WHEN THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY 350 VOLUNTEERS IN INDIA, THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT INFORMALLY CONVEYED TO THE EMBASSY ITS DESIRE THAT NO FOREIGN COUNTRY HAVE MORE THAN 50 VOLUNTEERS IN INDIA AT ANY ONE TIME. THE HARYANA STATE GOVERNMENT IN OCTOBER 1972 ASKED THE 12 VOLUNTEERS THERE TO LEAVE, IN OTHER STATES VOLUNTEERS COMPLETED

THEIR ASSIGNMENTS BUT NO NEW REQUESTS FOR VOLUNTEERS WERE IMMEDIATELY FORTHCOMING. WHEN AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS ON FEBRUARY 28, 1973, THERE WERE 94 VOLUNTEERS IN INDIA. THAT NUMBER IS EXPECTED TO REACH ZERO ON FEBRUARY 1, 1974.

5. THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ON AUGUST 2, 1973, APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE EMBASSY THE FIRST NEW REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS,
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OVER A YEAR--PNJAB SOUGHT EIGHT VOLUNTEERS TRAINED IN DAIRYING. SUBSEQUENTLY, REQUESTS WERE RECEIVED ON BEHALF OF RAJASTHAN (AUG 24), TAMIL NADU (SEP 27), AND AGAIN PUNJAB (JAN 9, 1974) THE CURRENT STATUS OF THESE REQUESTS IS DESCRIBED IN REF B. UNDER THE CEILING OF 50 VOLUNTEERS, PEACE CORPS/INDIA HOPES TO CONCENTRATE VOLUNTEERS IN NORTHERN ZONAL STATES AND TO ENSURE THAT THE VOLUNTEERS POSTED THERE CONFORM CLOSELY TO THE EXPRESSED REQUIREMENTS OF THE STATE GOVERNMENTS.

6. IT IS OF SYMBOLIC AND PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE TO INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS THAT THESE REQUESTS BE FILL ON SCHEDULE WITH QUALIFIED VOLUNTEERS. THEIR EARLY ARRIVAL IN INDIA WILL CONSTITUTE VISIBLE EVIDENCE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS SINCERE IN ITS PROFESSED DESIRE

TO REBUILD INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS ON A FIRMER, MORE REALISTIC BASIS. WHILE NEITHER COUNTRY WISHES TO RETURN TO THE OLD

RELATIONSHIP CHARACTERIZED, INTER ALIA, BY VERY LARGE NUMBERS OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PERSONNEL, FILLING THESE NEW REQUESTS PROMPTLY WILL DEMONSTRATE THAT THERE ARE INDEED SPECIFIC, SPECIALIZED AREAS IN WHICH THE USA THHROUGH THE PEACE CORPS CAN COOPERATE POSITIVELY WITH INDIA. THERE IS A PRACTICAL ASPECT AS WELL. THE VARIOUS STATE GOVERNMENTS ALLOCATE SCARCE RESOURCES-- DORMITORY SPACE DURING TRAINING PERIODS, AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND OTHER INPUTS, TRANSPORT FACILITIES, GOVERNMENT OFFICERS' TIME-- ON THE BASIS OF SCHEDULED VOLUNTEER ARRIVAL DATES. DURING THE LAST QUARTER OF 1972, THE ESTIMATED VALUE OF THESE INDIA VI ESOURCES AVERAGED BETWEEN \$900 AND \$1,000 PER VOLUNTEER PER YEAR. WHEN THESE ARRIVAL DATES ARE POSTPONED, THERE IS INEVITABLY SOME

WASTE AS THESE RESOURCES ARE DIVERTED ELSEWHERE. MORE IMPORTANTLY A DELAY CAUSES THE PEACE CORPS AND THROUGH IT THE US MISSION AND GOVERNMENT TO LOSE SOME CREDIBILITY IN THE EYES OF STATE AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

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